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STRENGTHENING OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

Letter dated 3 January 1997 from the Permanent Representative of Solomon Islands to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to address you with reference to the letter addressed to your predecessor by Ambassador Qin Huasun, Permanent Representative of the People's Republic of China to the United Nations, dated 16 October 1996 (A/51/526).

To promote a better understanding of the issues raised in Ambassador Qin Huasun's letter, I believe that it would be useful to review briefly the establishment and existence of the Republic of China as a sovereign State in accordance with the principles of international law. I am forwarding for this purpose a statement, dated 29 July 1996, by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of China on Taiwan (see annex).

In the general debate of the fifty-first session of the General Assembly, the representative of Solomon Islands, in keeping with the purposes and principles of the Charter, spoke on behalf of the Republic of China on Taiwan, who, barred from the United Nations since 1971, is seeking to enlarge its already sizable contribution to the developing world and to protect the rights of its 21.4 million people through the Organization. Solomon Islands hopes that negotiations for reunification based on the proposals the People's Republic of China and the Republic of China on Taiwan have each put forward will begin in the near future, a process that will contribute significantly to the reduction of tension in the Taiwan Straits.

To foster these negotiations, whose preparation and conduct will require the highest level of diplomatic skill exercised over a considerable period of time, Solomon Islands supports the proposal that the General Assembly establish

an ad hoc committee to consider how the Republic of China on Taiwan could enhance its contribution to the international community through the United Nations system. By helping to enlarge the cooperation between the People's Republic of China and the Republic of China on Taiwan, the ad hoc committee would assist the peaceful reunification the leadership of both Governments desire. The historical and legal questions Ambassador Qin Huasun raised in his letter could be addressed by the proposed ad hoc committee.

I have the honour to request you to have the text of the present letter and its attachment circulated as an official document of the General Assembly under agenda item 48.[1]

(Signed) Rex S. HOROI
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary
Permanent Representative of Solomon Islands
to the United Nations

Notes

[1] The letter and its annex have been reproduced as received. The designations employed do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the Secretariat of the United Nations concerning the legal status of any country, territory or area, or of its authorities.

ANNEX

Statement issued on 29 July 1996 by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of China on Taiwan

On 23 July 1996, Mr. Qin Huasun, the Permanent Representative of the People's Republic of China (PRC), submitted a letter to the Secretary-General of the United Nations protesting a proposal made by 16 countries to the United Nations concerning the representation of the Republic of China (ROC) within the Organization (A/51/223). On 24 July 1996, Mr. Cui Tiankai, the Spokesman of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the PRC, also made a statement criticizing the said proposal. On these, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the ROC wishes to comment as follows:

Since its establishment in 1912, the Republic of China has always been a sovereign State. In 1949, because of the civil war in mainland China, the ROC relocated its National Government to Taiwan. Although the territory under the ROC's jurisdiction diminished as a result, the ROC's statehood was never interrupted. It should be noted that when the ROC Government regained control over Taiwan and the Pescadores in 1945, in accordance with the Cairo Declaration and Potsdam Proclamation, the PRC had not yet been established. Over the half century since the PRC's establishment in 1949, the PRC has never - even for a single day - exercised jurisdiction over the Taiwan Penghu (Pescadores), Kinmen (Quemoy) and Matsu area. The statement in Mr. Qin's "letter of protest" that "the status of Taiwan as a part of the territory of the People's Republic of China has never changed, nor has the Government of the People's Republic of China ever given up its jurisdiction over Taiwan" is contrary to historical fact.

In the 47 years since the ROC relocated its national government to Taiwan, it has, through dedicated efforts, made itself an economically affluent and politically democratic society. The ROC, with its elected Government, defined territories and people, is a peace-loving country and always observes international laws and practices. It has, since its establishment, retained the full power to conduct its foreign affairs. It has the determination as well as the ability to fulfil the obligations and rights stipulated in the Charter of the United Nations. The ROC now enjoys formal diplomatic relations with 30 countries and also maintains substantive trade and cultural ties with more than 140 countries in the world. It is undeniably a sovereign State, in accordance with the principles of international law.

When the United Nations was established in 1945, the ROC was one of its founding members and a permanent member of the Security Council. This fact is enshrined in Articles 23 and 110 of the Charter. On 25 October 1971, however, the General Assembly adopted resolution 2758 (XXVI) and substituted the PRC for the ROC as the representative of China, forcing the ROC to withdraw from the United Nations. However, resolution 2758 (XXVI) did not, in any way, constitute a complete solution to the issue of China's representation resulting from China's division in 1949. In fact the resolution denied the fundamental rights of the 21.3 million people on Taiwan, under the jurisdiction of the ROC, to participate in the political, economic and cultural activities within the United

Nations system. Moreover, it has been 25 years since resolution 2758 (XXVI) was adopted, and it does not reflect the changes that have taken place during that period of time. Today, resolution 2758 (XXVI) is obsolete and unjust and needs to be re-examined.

The ROC's United Nations bid seeks only proper and effective representation for the ROC's 21.3 million people, and protection of their fundamental rights in the United Nations. The campaign does not intend to challenge the PRC's current seat in the Organization. The ROC is still committed to the policy of eventual unification of China. The solution proposed by the ROC is reasonable and judicious. The current impasse between the two sides of the Taiwan Straits is a result of the PRC's military intimidation and its dogmatic and dictatorial attitude towards the ROC. If the PRC is sincere in promoting peace between the two sides of the Taiwan Straits, it should resume dialogue through the established channels of negotiation. Only through the resumption of such channels of negotiation can the issue of China's reunification be resolved in a peaceful manner, and the peace and security of the Asia-Pacific region be maintained.